

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 1-18, 20, 21, 28-33, 36, 37, 39-50, and 52-54 are pending in this application. With this Amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 11-14 and 16-18 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and have amended claims 15, 28, 29, 40, 42 and 44. Claims 55-59 have been added. Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-10, 15, 20, 21, 28-33, 36, 37, 39-50, and 52-59 will be pending in this application.

Allowed Claims

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of claims 1-10, 20-21, 36, 37, 39-50 and 52-54 in the present application.

Amended Claims 29, 40, 42, 44

Claims 29, 40, 42 and 44 have been amended to correct typographical errors and other informalities.

Claim Objections

Claims 14-15, and 30-33 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

With this Amendment, Applicants have rewritten objected to claims 14 and 30 as independent claims 55 and 56 respectively. Claim 15 has been amended to depend from claim 55. Claim 57-59 have been added. The presentation of claims 55 and 56 in independent form is merely a cosmetic change to original claims 14 and 30 which now incorporate by reference the limitations of the claim(s) to which they refer and as such do not narrow the original scope of claims 14 and 30. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 15 and 55-59 are in condition for allowance.

Claim rejections

Claims 11-13, and 16-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,140,105 to Belinski (hereinafter "Belinski"). Claims 28-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,804,208 to Dye (hereinafter "Dye").

§ 102(b) – Belinski

With this amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 11-13, and 16-18. Applicants reserve the right to continue prosecution of the independent claims 11 and 16 and the claims dependent therefrom in a continuation application.

§ 102(b) – Dye

The Examiner has rejected claims 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dye. Dye describes a manifold coupling assembly including siderails 23 and end walls 24. The end walls 24 include an orifice 46, a locking finger and a tab 50. (See column 4, lines 15-25). Dye does not, however, describe a housing body and a plurality of parallel ribs with at least one of the plurality of parallel ribs including a notch, to receive a coupler, as recited by claim 28. Applicants therefore believe that claim 28 is in condition for allowance. Claim 29 depends from claim 28 and is believed to be allowable as well. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.


Final Remarks

Claims 1-10, 15, 20, 21, 28-33, and 36, 37, 39-50 and 52-59 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Such allowance is respectfully requested.

If necessary, Applicants request that this Response be considered a request for an extension of time for a time appropriate for the response to be timely filed. Applicants request that any required fees needed beyond those submitted with this Response be charged to the account of Bose McKinney & Evans LLP, Deposit Account Number 02-3223.

Respectfully submitted,

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